

Message Text

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ACTION EA-06

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CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 4864

LIMDIS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, KS

SUBJECT: BLUE HOUSE SECRETARY DISCUSSES HUMAN RIGHTS

REF: SEOUL 4614

1. DURING JULY 1 LUNCH BLUE HOUSE FIRST SENIOR SECRETARY FOR STATE AFFAIRS, YU HYOK-IN, EXPRESSED KEEN INTEREST TO POL COUNS IN CURRENT US PUBLIC OPINION ON KOREAN HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE. AFTER REVIEWING GENERAL IMPACT OF THIS ISSUE ON BILATERAL RELATIONS, POL COUNS NOTED THAT SPECIFIC PROBLEMS, SUCH AS REV. KIM KWAN-SOK AND KIM CHI-HA TRIALS AND EMERGENCY MEASURE NINE CAUSED PARTICULAR CONCERN ON PART OF MANY AMERICANS.

2. YU SAID THAT "SOLUTION" WAS BEING SOUGHT TO KIM KWAN-SOK CASE. HE FELT, HOWEVER, THAT KIM CHI-HA CASE SHOULD NOT CAUSE ANY PROBLEMS FOR US PUBLIC. KIM, HE SAID, HAD CONFESSED TO BEING "MARXIST AND COMMUNIST" AND HIS TRIAL WAS BEING HELD IN OPEN COURT. POL COUNS NOTED THAT SOME PEOPLE HERE AND ABROAD HAD QUESTIONED CONFESSION AND THAT, IN ANY
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CASE, US PUBLIC DID NOT PUT MUCH STOCK IN

CONFESSIONS IN CASES WHERE MAJOR CRIMINAL CHARGES INVOLVED.

3. YU ASKED WHETHER KOREAN HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE WOULD BE IMPORTANT ISSUE DURING 1976 US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS. POL COUNS REPLIED THAT ELECTION CAMPAIGNS USUALLY CENTERED AROUND DOMESTIC AND OVERALL FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES. MORE IMPORTANT FOR KOREA WAS FACT THAT CURRENT LEVEL OF INTEREST IN KOREAN HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE WAS HIGH. IT WOULD SEEM ADVISABLE THEREFORE FOR ROKG TO TAKE THIS INTEREST INTO ACCOUNT AT PRESENT TIME.

4. COMMENT: YU, AN INFLUENTIAL PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR, HAS GENERALLY BEEN CLOSE-MOUTHED WITH AMERICANS. HIS PERSISTENT QUESTIONS IN THIS MEETING ABOUT US CONCERN OVER HUMAN RIGHTS MAY INDICATE A GROWING INCLINATION IN THE BLUE HOUSE TO TRY TO MOLLIFY US OPINIONS. THE REMARK ON A "SOLUTION" TO THE KIM KWAN-SOK CASE ECHOES EARLIER INDICATIONS (REFTEL) WE HAVE HAD THAT KIM MIGHT BE FOUND GUILTY AND THEN AMNESTIED. YU'S COMMENT ON KIM CHI-HA, HOWEVER, SUGGESTS THAT ROKG HAS NOT YET DECIDED ON LENIENCY IN THIS CASE.
SNEIDER

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